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SUBJECT: BELGIUM MLAT UPDATE

REF: A. SECSTATE 1199
 1B. BRUSSELS 1953
 1C. BRUSSELS 1965

Belgium's Council of State, a judicial body, provided its advice and comment on the draft ratification legislation for the US-EU Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance Agreements legislation in mid December. The foreign and justice ministries are currently preparing a response to the Council's advice that will be submitted to Parliament along with the draft law. Belgium's government resigned December 22 due to alleged attempts to influence a major judicial decision. A new government was sworn in December 30. The draft law and advice package must be signed again by the new justice minister and the foreign minister before its transmittal to Parliament. We expect the package to be sent to Parliament for consideration by the end of the month. Post is urging the government to make its quick parliamentary passage a priority.

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